

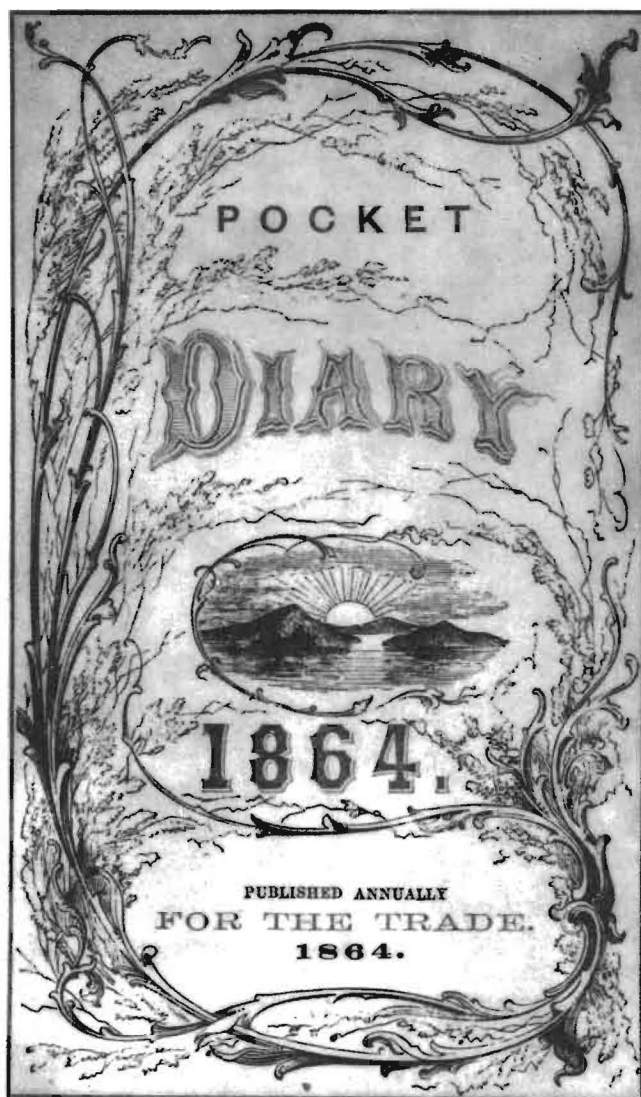
RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

VOLUME XXIV No. 2

1994

THE 1864 DIARY OF PRIVATE JOHN T. KELLY SECOND VERMONT REGIMENT



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THE 1864 DIARY OF PRIVATE JOHN T. KELLY

Second Vermont Regiment

Edited by Don Wickman

In Special Collections of the Bailey-Howe Library at the University of Vermont is a small bound manuscript; the diary of John T. Kelly. The entries detail the year 1864.

By the time the author initiated his diary, he was a proven veteran. Eighteen-year-old John T. Kelly enlisted in Rutland 16 August 1862 and was officially mustered into the service as a private in Company B, Second Vermont Volunteer Regiment, on 15 September 1862. Kelly was one of many men who answered President Lincoln's call for 300,000 more volunteers for the army.

Kelly joined a company originally raised predominantly in Castleton under the command of painter-turned-soldier James Hope. By the time of Kelly's enlistment, Hope had resigned and First Lieutenant Rollin C. Ward led the company. Kelly, with other new enlistees from Rutland County, helped to supplement the depleted ranks of Company B.

The year 1864 was a decisive time in the Civil War. Lieutenant-General U.S. Grant was the new commander-in-chief of the Union armies and had chosen to accompany the Army of the Potomac. This army's goal was simple; defeat the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia under the direction of Robert E. Lee. The Second Vermont with the rest of the Vermont Brigade played a critical role in the campaign which helped bring the war in Virginia to a close at Appomattox in April 1865.

Many of Kelly's diary entries are brief, for the daily life of the private was not always active. Still, while in the ranks, Kelly participated in the battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and the entire Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Fortunately, Kelly came through all this fierce combat unscathed, but witnessed the deaths of the Second Vermont's colonel, Newton Stone, in the Wilderness, and the acting commander of Company B, First Lieutenant Hiram Bailey, at Cold Harbor, plus numerous comrades either killed or maimed.

John T. Kelly survived the remainder of the war and was mustered out with the surviving members of the Second Vermont in Burlington on 19 June 1865. What happened to Kelly after the war is a mystery for there exists no pension record at the National Archives nor a record of his death in either Rutland City or the surrounding communities. Any further information relating to this Rutland diarist would fill a void.

The diary is presented in its original form. Only words with questionable spelling have been corrected and spaces have been left between thoughts to provide easier comprehension. Footnotes are included to help identify the many people, places, and events mentioned in the diary.

John T. Kelly,
Co^d B. 2nd Regt.
Vermont Vols.
2nd Brigade
2nd Division
6th Army Corps
Army of the
Potomac

The editor of this diary, Don Wickman, is from Rutland. A recent graduate with a Master's in History from the University of Vermont, he has extensively researched Mount Independence in Orwell and the actions of Vermonters in the Civil War. He is presently editing Civil War letters from the *Rutland Herald*.

January 1 — Camp near Brandy Station, Virginia¹ Very cold day. all quiet in Camp

January 2 — The day is Very Cold Nothing unusual in Camp

January 3 — Company Inspection at 10. OClock the veterans got their pay and furlough and starte for Vermont²

January 4 — It began to Snow at 11 O'clock and Snowed all day. We get Orders to move at a Moments notice

January 5 — the day is very fine but the wind began to blow very hard at 2 oclock all quite [quiet] in Camp

January 6 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day. no duty All quite in Camp Dress parade

January 7 — Arrival of Recruits to fill the Ranks. the day is very fine but it began to Snow at night all quite in Camp

January 8 — The day is a fine one Nothing unusual in Camp Recieved a letter from boston Massachusetts Inspection of Arms

January 9 — Cool but pleasant day no duty all quite in Camp

January 10 — Company Inspection at 10. O Clock fine day no duty

January 11 — Camp near Brandy Station virginia fine day no duty all quite in camp

January 12 — Arrival of Recruits for the Regiment fine day Recieved a letter from M.B. Werrington London

January 13 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day no duty All quite in Camp

January 14 — Fine day. No duty all quite in camp

January 15 — Camp near brandy Station Virginia fine day. no duty All quite in Camp.

January 16 — Inspection of Knapsacks guns an equipments by Captain Brown.³ All quite in Camp

¹Campground for the Army of the Potomac for the winter of 1863–64. Brandy Station is northeast of Culpeper, VA.

²Since many enlistments were due to expire in 1864, the federal government offered incentives to men willing to re-enlist before the campaign commenced. One of these incentives was a thirty day furlough home.

³Probably Captain Addison Brown of the 4th Vermont who was on brigade commander Lewis A. Grant's staff.

January 17 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day no duty All quite in Camp

January 18 — Fine day. no duty All quite in Camp

January 19 — Very cold day no duty All quite in Camp

January 20 — Fine day. no duty

January 21 — Camp near brandy Station Virginia fine day All quite in Camp

January 22 — Very fine day no duty All quite in Camp

January 23 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Fine day no duty. all quite in Camp

January 24 — All quite in Camp

January 25 — Fine day no duty all quite in camp

January 26 — Went to the Station Brigade dress parade at 5 p.m. Recieved a letter from Chicago

January 27 — Camp near brandy Station Virginia Fine day. no duty. All quite in Camp.

January 28 — Company an Brigade drills very hot day All Quiet in Camp

January 29 — Company drill an dress parade

January 30 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Fine day. no duty all quiet in Camp

January 31 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 1 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Raining a little All quiet in Camp

February 2 — Raining a little in the evening accompanied by thunder and Lightning All quiet in Camp

February 3 — Very cold day no duty All quiet in Camp

February 4 — Went to the Station fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 5 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 6 — Orders to march at 8 a.m. heavy firing nearly all day. skirmishing at dark. Raining all day. We did not march Excitement in Camp

February 7 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 8 — Camp near brandy Station Virginia fine day no duty All quiet in Camp Dress parade

February 9 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp Dress parade

February 10 — Recieved two months pay from the United States. Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 11 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

February 12 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp Dress parade

February 13 — Return of the 5th Vermont Veterans fine day Company Drill Dress parade⁴

February 14 — General Inspection of guns and equipments knapsacks and clothing Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 15 — Snowing in the evening All quiet in Camp

February 16 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 17 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

February 18 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

February 19 — fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

February 20 — fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

February 21 — Company Inspection fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 22 — fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 23 — Review of the 6th Army Corps⁵ very hot day All quiet in Camp

February 24 — fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

February 25 — fine day Brigade Dress parade Battalion drill Raining at Dark

February 26 — Review of the Brigade by Govr Smith⁶ of Vermont orders to March

February 27 — encamped at 5 p.m. the day is hot and we are very tired

February 28 — Marched about 8 miles and lay in line of battle no firing encamped for the night

February 29 — Camp near Robinsons Creek Virginia⁷ Mustered for two months pay Raining all night

March 1 — on guard

March 2 — Orders to March at 4 a.m. Marched to Brandy Station 25 miles very muddy

March 3 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia All quiet in Camp Dress Parade

⁴If enough men re-enlisted under the government incentive program the regiment could be designated a "Veteran" regiment, a great honor.

⁵The Corps to which the Second Vermont Regiment and the Vermont Brigade belonged.

⁶John Gregory Smith of St. Albans, who was elected Vermont's governor in 1863.

⁷This creek is approximately ten miles southwest of Culpeper.



Brandy Station where Grant arrived 10 Mar 1864 to take command of the Federal forces. Camp location for many Vermont troops.



A quiet day in camp.

March 4 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp Dress Parade

March 5 — All quiet in Camp

March 6 — General Inspection Fine day, all quiet in Camp undress parade

March 7 — Brigade drill an Review fine day. all quiet in Camp Dress Parade

March 8 — Raining in the morning All quiet in Camp undress parade

March 9 — Fine day. all quiet in Camp Dress parade and Drumming out [a dishonorably discharged soldier] of Camp

March 10 — Raining all day undress parade All quiet in Camp

March 11 — Raining all day had storm at night All quiet in Camp

March 12 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in camp Dress parade

March 13 — Company Inspection by Capt. Tracy⁸ Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

March 14 — General Inspection by Capt. Brown fine day Dress parade All quiet in Camp

March 15 — Company drill And dress parade Fine day All quiet in Camp

March 16 — Camp near Brandy Station Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 17 — Division Review by Gen. O'Neil⁹ Dress parade Fine day. All quiet in Camp

March 18 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 19 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 20 — Regimental Inspection Fine day All quiet in Camp

March 21 — Fine day Dress parade All quiet in Camp

March 22 — Camp near Brandy Station fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp Snowing at dark

March 23 — Snow is about a foot deep had a snowballing match with the 6th Vermont¹⁰ undress parade

March 24 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 25 — Raining all day no duty All quiet in Camp

March 26 — Camp near Brandy Station Fine Day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 27 — Company Inspection Fine Day. no duty All quiet in Camp

⁸Captain Amasa Tracy of Company H. Tracy, of Middlebury, later became colonel of the Second Regiment.

⁹Brigadier-General Thomas Neill, commander of the Third Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps.

¹⁰This was not an unusual activity in either army. While serving as recreation, it also provided an opportunity for men to better learn military maneuvers in less hazardous conditions. Other correspondence describes this snowball fight with the Second Vermont being the victors.

March 28 — Camp near Brandy Station Brigade drill. fine day All quiet in Camp

March 29 — Target Shooting Raining in the Evening All quiet in Camp

March 30— Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

March 31 — Target practice fine day All quiet in Camp Signed the pay Roll

April 1 — Recieved two months pay Raining nearly all day All quiet in Camp

April 2 — fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

April 3 — Medical Inspection All quiet in Camp

April 4 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

April 5 — Raining all day

April 6 — Camp near Brandy Station virginia Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

April 7 — Target practice in the morning at 10 O.Clock Company Inspection in the afternoon All quiet in Camp

April 8 — Company Drill in the forenoon Battalion drill in the afternoon All quiet in Camp

April 9 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

April 10 — Inspection of Arms All quiet in Camp

April 11 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

April 12 — Brigade Review by General Getty¹¹ fine day. all quiet in Camp

April 13 — Company drill in the morning at 8. O.Clock Brigade drill in the afternoon All quiet in Camp

April 14 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Fine Day, no duty All quiet in Camp

April 15 — Company and Battalion drill and Dress parade Raining a little at night All quiet in Camp

April 16 — Raining in the Morning All quiet in Camp

April 17 — Company Inspection All quiet in Camp

April 18 — Review of the 6th Corps by Lieut Genl. Grant¹² Very hot day All quiet in Camp

April 19 — Inspection of Knapsacks haversacks and Canteens All quiet in Camp

April 20 — Company and Battalion drill Dress parade Fine day All quiet in Camp

¹¹Brigadier-General George Washington Getty, assigned to command of the Second Division in early 1864 replacing Albion Howe.

¹²Lieutenant-General Ulysses S. Grant, new commander-in-chief of Union forces.

April 21 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Fine day All quiet in Camp

April 22 — Squad Company and battalion drill fine day all quiet in Camp

April 23 — fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

April 24 — Company Inspection fine day All quiet in Camp

April 25 — Company and Battalion drill fine day All quiet in Camp

April 26 — Battalion Drill fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

April 27 — Company and Battalion drill Brigade Dress parade All quiet in Camp

April 28 — Camp near Brandy Station Virginia Squad and Company drill Brigade dress parade

April 29 — Squad Company and Battalion drill dress parade Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

April 30 — General Inspection and Muster Fine day. All quiet in Camp

May 1 — Inspection of Arms and Equipments. Fine day. All quiet in Camp undress parade

May 2 — Squad and Company drill Raining in the evening

May 3 — Squad and Company drill Fine day Orders to march tomorrow at 4 O Clock A.M. with Six days Rations

May 4 — Marched at 4 O Clock A.M. Crossed the Rapidan at noon and rested for one hour. Marched along the Plank road towards Richmond about 20 miles altogether

May 5 — Marched about 4 miles. fought in line of battle for about two hours Colonel Stone is Killed we lost about 250 officers and men they are burying the Colonel now, about 9 p.m.¹³

May 6 — Went in to the line a 4 a.m. and stayed until 12 O clock the rebels turned our left and we fell back we lost near 400 men both days¹⁴

May 7 — moved a little to the left at 4 a.m. then moved back into the rifle pits. ordered to join the Corps at 6 p.m. Cooked supper and then Started on the Plank Road to Spotsylvania Court house¹⁵

May 8—Marched at night halted at 8.00 for breakfast. marched at 10 a.m. halted at the Supply train for 5 days Rations at 1.30 p.m. marched at 3. p.m. four miles and lay all night in line of battle

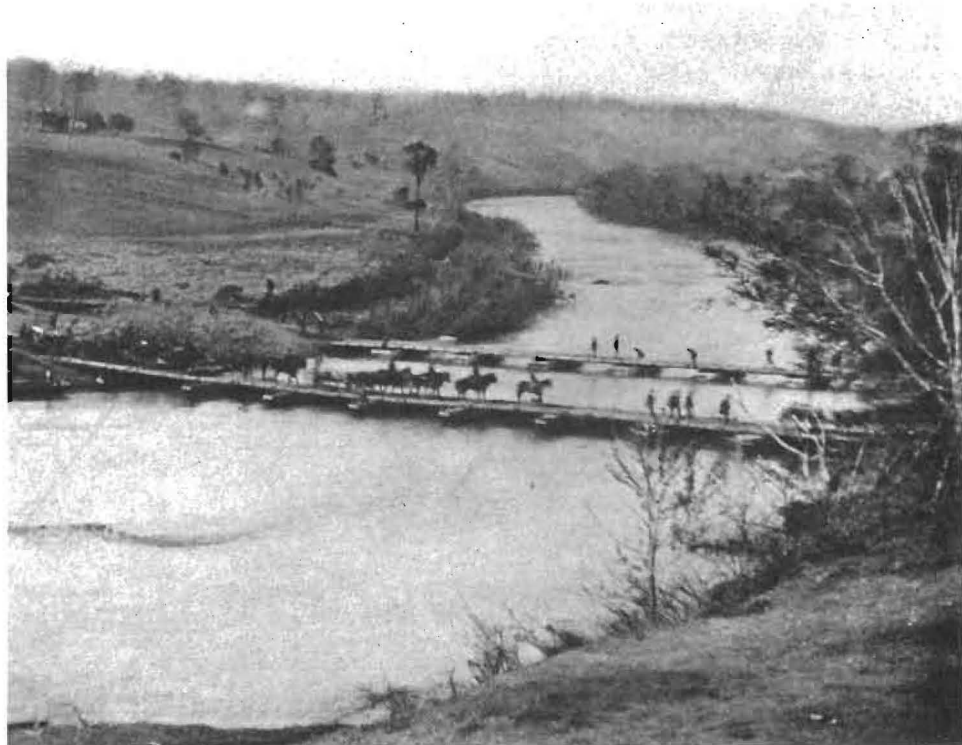
¹³This was the first day of the Battle of the Wilderness when the Vermont Brigade helped to defend the vital intersection of the Orange Plank and Brock Roads. The colonel was Colonel Newton Stone of the Second Vermont. He had been colonel for only a month.

¹⁴After the two days of fighting in the Wilderness, the Vermont Brigade lost over 1200 men out of 2800 rank and file entering the fray.

¹⁵A vital crossroads south of the Wilderness on the route to Richmond.



Heavy Artillery units (shown here at drill) were brigaded to service as infantry by Grant and performed valiantly in the Wilderness campaign.



Rear Guard crossing pontoon bridge across the Rapidan en route to the Battle of the Wilderness. Bridge in background already being dismantled.

May 20 — on the Skirmish line we advanced our lines at 2 p.m. The enemy did not fire any except on the Right Relieved at 11 p.m. thirty six hours and rest.

May 21 — Fell in at 4 O'clock a.m. and ordered in Fatigue we are building breast works moved a little to the Right the enemy advanced upon us in three lines of battle and we drove them back marched all night

May 22 — halted at 4 O Clock a.m. for breakfast marched at 9 and halted at 11 an marched at 2 O.Clock and marched until 8 O.Clock

May 23 — Marched at 8 A.M. and halted at 12.30 for five days Rations Marched at 2 OClock to the Northanna River and encamped on the banks at 10 p m cannonading on the right

May 24 — Marched at daylight and crossed the River and halted for breakfast we encamped for the day and night it Rained during the night

May 25 — orders to March at 5 O.Clock A.M. about 2 miles and halted. formed in line of battle and Stayed so until dark then threw up breastworks

May 26 — we Stayed in our old position untill dark when we recrossed the Northanna and marched all night untill daylight when we halted for coffee the road is very _____

May 27 — Marched at 5 A.M. and halted at 12 for dinner marched at 1 p.m. and halted at dark marched about 5 miles the day is hot and we are tired

May 28 — Marched at daylight halted at 8 a.m. for breakfast Crossed the Pamunky River²⁰ and built breast works very hot day

May 29 — we Stayed here all day the first division went out on a Reconnaissance and we fell in under arms the day is a very hot one

May 30 — we marched a little to the right an destroyed a bridge and part of the Virginia Central Rail road then moved to the left about 6 miles and went in picket we are in the Rear our Artillery Sheld the works

May 31 — we went from the line at daylight and advanced at Seven O.Clock and fell back at 8 and advanced again at noon. moved to the left at 5 p.m. and drove in the enemy's pickets. Relieved at 11 p.m.

June 1 — Marched to the vicinity of Cold harbor. and advanced on the enemys works about 5 O.Clock p m²¹ there was very heaving firing of artillery mostly

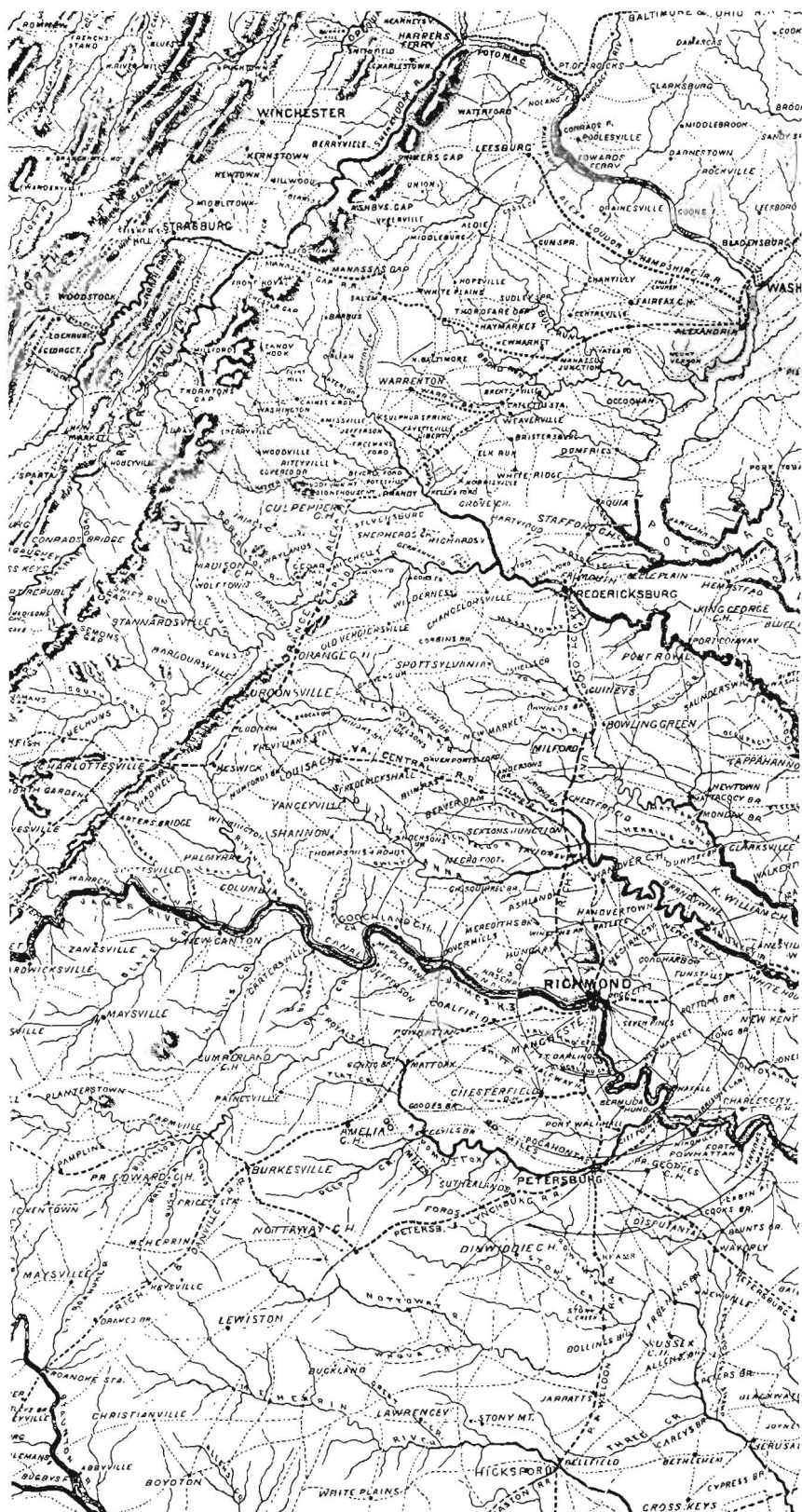
June 2 — we were Relieved by an Artillery Regiment of the 2nd Corps And moved to the right and built breast works an Stayed all night it rained nearly all the while heavy Skirmishing all day

June 3 — we moved to the next line of breast works Lieutenant Hiram Bailey²² was hit in the head with a piece of Shell and Killed him instantly. I went with his body to Division Hospital

²⁰Pamunkey River. Formed by the joining of the North Anna and South Anna Rivers.

²¹The assaults on the Confederate works at Cold Harbor were some of the most costly in the entire war.

²²Bailey was an officer in Kelly's company and from Brandon.



Map Showing Operations In Virginia,
May, 1864 - April, 1865.

June 4 — we lay behind the third line of breast works until night then we Relieved the 6th Vermont on the front line we began to throw up breastworks but could not finish them before day light

June 5 — Very Sharp Skirmishing all day untill nearly night when the firing Ceased for about half an hour then the Artillery and infantry opened on both Sides and it was very hot for about an hour

June 6 — we left the Rifle pits at noon and encamped about half a mile in the Rear there was very heavy firing in the evening The day is a very hot one

June 7 — The enemy threw some mortar Shells into our Camp but fortunately they hit but one man slightly in the foot

June 8 — there is nothing going on today there is but very little firing on either sides it is a very hot day

June 9 — All quiet along the line except a little Skirmishing at intervals the day is a very hot one

June 10 — All quiet. Very hot day

June 11 — The enemy threw a few mortar Shells into our Camp but they did not hit any body The Regiment Came in of[f] Picket

June 12 — Orders to March at dark. Marched about three miles and Stayed in the Breast works untill the train moved out of the way

June 13 — Marched at one O.Clock A.M. and crossed the Chicka homony River²³ an Swamp we halted at 8 O clock p.m. we marched 30 miles I am Sick and very tired

June 14 — Marched to the Vicinity of Charles County Court house and Encamped at 11 O.Clock A.M. we marched about 6 Miles

June 15 — Marched about 3 Miles an Stayed in the woods during the day it is very hot

June 16 — we Stayed in the woods untill 5 O.Clock p.m. then we Crossed the James River²⁴ and Marched all night

June 17 — Marched all day and Stayed in line of battle I rode in the Ambulance we are within three Miles of Petersburg²⁵

June 18 — The Regiment was on the Skirmish line and was Relieved at 10 p.m. heavy firing all day the enemy fell back two miles

June 19 — Those Men Came in 1861 went home today. we went out on the line at dark light Skirmishing all day²⁶

²³The Chickahominy River.

²⁴The bridge Kelly crossed was a floating pontoon bridge over a half mile in length.

²⁵A major rail center.

²⁶Kelly is referring to the men who had chosen not to re-enlist and whose three-year terms had expired.

June 20 — we Stayed in the Ravine untill dark we Relieved part of the 2nd Army Corps They Shelled us in the Morning one wounded in Co. B.²⁷

June 21 — we Stayed in the front line of Rifle pits all day we were Relieved at dark by part of the 18th Army Corps we marched at night

June 22 — our division is on the flank the first and third divisions are in front very heavy Skirmishing all day we built Rifle pits but left them and advanced

June 23 — we built breast works at 6 p.m. the enemy advanced in heavy Column we moved back about one Mile and lay down for the night

June 24 — we layed Still all day it is very hot we moved up to the breast works at dark and Strengthened the works Shell proof

June 25 — we layed Still all day its dreadful hot all is quiet in our front there is very heavy Cannonading on the Right

June 26 — All quiet in our front The day is a very hot one

June 27 — Moved about one mile to the left of our lines an pitched tents dreadful hot day Rained at night

June 28 — Very hot day All is quiet in our front Cannonading on the Right

June 29 — Orders to march at 2 O.Clock p.m. Marched about 8 miles to the Weldon and Petersburg Railroad²⁸ and went on picket

June 30 — Mustered for 2 Months Moved about one Mile by the left flank our forces are destroying the Railroad we were withdrawn at dark and marched 6 M

July 1 — moved about half mile to the Right and halted Detailed for picket very hot day

July 2 — The pickets were withdrew at 10 A.M. we marched back to our old Place and encamped about one half Mile to the left

July 3 — Very hot day All quiet in the front

July 4 — There is no firing today it is very hot

July 5 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

July 6 — Removed Camp a little to the Right Very hot day

July 7 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

July 8 — Inspection of Arms Very hot day All quiet in Camp

July 9 — orders to march at 10 p.m. Marched all night to City point²⁹

July 10 — Embarked on the Steamer Georgia from City point at 4 A.M. Very hot day

²⁷The wounded man was Benjamin P. Wheeler of Pawlet.

²⁸One of the five railroads which ran into Petersburg.

²⁹City Point was the Army of the Potomac's central supply depot at the junction of the Appomattox and James Rivers.

July 11 — arrived at Washington at 6 p.m. and Stayed at the wharf on guard over the baggage the Regt went to the front³⁰

July 12 — Marched to Fort Stevens we guarded the baggage all night it Rained very hard for an hour the third brigade lost heavily³¹

July 13 — Marched a[t] 2 p.m. as flankers up Potomac Easy Roads Maryland halted at 11 p.m. very hot day

July 14 — Marched to Poolesville³² and Encamped for the night The day is a very hot one

July 15 — Camp near Poolesville Maryland Execution of a deserter and spy from the 67th NY All quiet in Camp

July 16 — Marched through Poolesville and waded the potomac it is about 4 foot deep³³ Marched to Leesburg Virginia and Encamped about 2 miles from the village

July 17 — Camp near Leesburg Virginia Very hot day All quiet in Camp

July 18 — Orders to March at 5 A.M. Crossed the Blue Ridge the enemy drove our advance across the Shenandoah River

July 19 — Camp near Snickers Gap Shenandoah Valley, Virginia Very hot day & All quiet

July 20 — Orders to March at 2 p.m. Crossed the Shenandoah River it stormed very hard we Marched back through Snickers Gap and Marched all night

July 21 — Reached hampton³⁴ at 4 a.m. and Leesburg [Leesburg] at 9 a.m. Marched about 6 miles beyond Leesburg Crossed Goose creek an encamped for the night

July 22 — Marched about 15 Miles and encamped at 8 p.m. we were very tired

July 23 — Marched at 4 oClock and Crossed the Chain Bridge³⁵ and Marched to Tennallytown³⁶ and Encamped

July 24 — Recieved four months pay went to Georgetown and Washigton and Returned at 9 p.m.

July 25 — Camp nearly Tennallytown DC Very heavy Rain went to Washington at 4 p.m. and Returned at 9 p.m.

³⁰The Sixth Corps had been sent to Washington to blunt the Confederate force under Jubal Early which was advancing toward the rather unprotected capitol.

³¹Fort Stevens was one of the forts guarding Washington and a portion of its earthworks are preserved today.

³²Maryland town located opposite Leesburg, VA.

³³Probably Conrad's Ford.

³⁴Probably means Hamilton, VA, about six miles west of Leesburg.

³⁵One of the major bridges connecting Washington to Arlington, VA.

³⁶Small town in 1864. Now part of metropolitan Washington.

July 26 — Orders to March at 2 p.m. Marched to Rockville Maryland³⁷ and Encamped at 8 p.m. Very hot day

July 27 — Marched at 9 a.m. about 15 Miles and Encamped at 8 p.m. very hot

July 28 — Orders to March at 5 a.m. Marched to Jefferson City and Encamped at 11 p.m.

July 29 — Orders to March at 5 a.m. Marched to Harpers ferry and Crossed the potomac into Virginia and Encamped on Bolivers Heights³⁸

July 30 — Camp on Bolivers Heights Virginia Orders to March at 2 p.m. Crossed the potomac at Harpers ferry at 11 p.m. Marched about 2 Miles beyond petervill³⁹ and Encamped

July 31 — Marched at 9 a.m. by way of Jefferson City⁴⁰ to Frederick City and Encamped the day is very hot one Several died with Sunstroke

August 1 — Camp near Frederick City Maryland Very hot day All quiet in Camp

August 2 — Very hot day We had orders to march at 10 O clock a.m. we packed up and Started when the orders was Countermanded

August 3 — Marched at 5 A.M. To Monocacy Junction⁴¹ and Encamped. Very hot day

August 4 — Camp near Monocacy Junction Maryland fine day undress parade All quiet in Camp

August 5 — Orders to March at 9 p.m. Marched to Monocacy Junction and took the [rail]cars for Harpers ferry Raining all night

August 6 — Marched about 2 miles and Encamped Inspection of Arms

August 7 — Company Inspection All quiet in Camp Detailed on Picket at 8 o'clock p.m.

August 8 — Relieved of Picket by a detachment of the 11th Vermont and returned to Camp All is quiet in our front

August 9 — Very hot day All quiet in Camp

August 10 — Orders to March at 5 O.Clock a.m. Marched about 15 Miles and Encamped Rained a little in the afternoon

August 11 — Orders to March at 5 am Marched about 15 Miles and Encamped for the night

August 12 — Marched at 7 a.m. Marched about 18 miles The enemy held our Cavalry in Check Sharp Skirmishing

³⁷Located northwest of Washington.

³⁸Apparently Kelly was unaware West Virginia had joined the Union and this was no longer considered part of Virginia. Bolivars Heights is a strategic rise of land southwest of Harpers Ferry.

³⁹This town cannot be identified.

⁴⁰Town halfway between Harpers Ferry and Frederick, MD.

⁴¹This was on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad mainline. It was the site of Lew Wallace's successful delaying action on 9 July 1864 and is east of Frederick, MD.

August 13 — Marched at 9 A.M. Crossed Cedar Run⁴² and lay in the woods all day. Recrossed the run at night and Encamped

August 14 — Our Skirmishers advanced in the evening and drove in the enemys Skirmishers Captain Wales⁴³ is wounded in the head

August 15 — All is quiet today it is very hot

August 16 — Very hot day All quiet in Camp Marched at 11 p.m.

August 17 — halted at 6 o'clock a.m. for Breakfast Marched at 8 O clock Reached winchester⁴⁴ at 12 O clock Detailed for Picket

August 18 — Pickets were withdrew at 9 O. clock Marched as Rear guard About 8 Miles then joined the Brigade Raining all day

August 19 — Camp near Charlestown Shenandoah Valley Virginia⁴⁵ fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

August 20 — Company Inspection Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

August 21 — Inspection of Arms and Knapsacks at 8 O'clock A.M. the enemy Surprised our Camp at 9 O. Clock we went on the Skirmish line and had 5 Killed an 11 Wounded

August 22 — The Skirmishers were withdrew at 2 O. Clock A.M. Marched to Halltown⁴⁶ and Encamped we had Some Skirmishing at daylight but no casualties

August 23 — Orders to fall in under arms for one hour at daylight building breastworks all day All quiet in camp

August 24 — Building Breastworks there was Skirmishing on front of the 8th Army Corps All quiet in Camp

August 25 — Raining in the Afternoon Cannonading on our right All quiet in Camp

August 26 — Camp on Bolivars Heights Harpers ferry VA Heavy Cannonading on the left fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

August 27 — all is quiet in Camp it is Reported that the Rebels fell back beyond Charlestown

August 28 — Orders to March at daylight. Marched about 2 Miles beyond Charlestown and went on picket on our old battle ground

August 29 — our Cavalry drove the enemys rear guard about 2 Miles when they were Reinforced and gained their old ground back the third division of the 6th Corps with the Cavalry held them in Check

⁴²More commonly known as Cedar Creek just north of Strasburg, VA.

⁴³Captain Elijah Wales of Company C. He was from Brattleboro.

⁴⁴This town changed hands over seventy times during the war.

⁴⁵Now Charlestown, WV.

⁴⁶Town west of Harpers Ferry.

August 30 — the enemy are in force at Bunkers Hill⁴⁷ All is quiet on the line Captain B C Wood is in Camp

August 31 — All is quiet on the line Mustered for two months pay we were relieved by a Regiment of the first brigade and Returned to Camp at 9 p.m.

September 1 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp Dress parade

September 2 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp orders to march in the morning

September 3 — Marched at 5 a.m. Marched to Clifton⁴⁸ and encamped Rainey in the evening Cannonading untill dark

September 4 — Raining a little in the evening orders to move at 11 o clock p m building breastworks

September 5 — finished the breasworks at 6 oclock am moved back to our old Camp at 8. O clock and pitched tents Raining all day

September 6 — Raining all day election for U. Congress All quiet in Camp

September 7 — Camp near Clifton Virginia Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

September 8 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp undress parade

September 9 — Orders to March at 4 oclock a.m. Marched to Ripton and waited about two hours to escort the baggage train to Camp

September 10 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

September 11 — Inspection of Arms Raining in the afternoon all quiet in Camp

September 12 — Orders to March at 4 O clock A.M. on a Reconance we captured the 8th North Carolina Regiment Returned to Camp at 11 p.m.

September 13 — Raining in the Morning. All quiet in Camp

September 14 — Camp near Clifton Shenandoah Valley Virginia Raining all day Detailed for Guard

September 15 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp Dress parade.

September 16 — Company Drill in the morning at 9 A.M. All quiet in Camp

September 17 — Fine day All is quiet in Camp Dress parade

September 18 — Company Inspection at 11 a.m. Orders to March at 4 p.m. but it was postponed untill next day Raining

September 19 — orders to march at 2 A.M. Marched untill daylight when we encountered the enemy and drove them 8 miles and Captured the City of Winchester our loss is very light Considering the ground⁴⁹

⁴⁷Town north of Winchester, VA.

⁴⁸Located south of Charlestown, WV.

⁴⁹Kelly is describing the Third Battle of Winchester otherwise known as the Battle of Opequan.

September 20 — Orders to march at daylight Marched by way of Newton and Middletown Crossed Cedar Run and encamped within three miles of Strasburg

September 21 — Moved to the right at noon and formed in line of battle Moved at dusk and thre [threw] up breastwork the night is here Cold

September 22 — advanced as Skirmishers at 4.30 p.m. the eighth Corps drove them on the flank and the 6th and 19th Corps in front and caried their works marched all night to woodstock VA⁵⁰

September 23 — marched to Edinburg⁵¹ and encamped at 4 O.Clock pm Very hot day

September 24 — Orders to march at 6 O Clock A.M. Marched to Mount Jackson the enemies rear guard held us in check for one hour Marched by way of Newmarket and encamped at Seven p.m.

September 25 — Orders to march at 7 O.Clock A.M. Marched to the vicinity of harrisonburg and Encamped for the night Very hot day

September 26 — Camp near harrisonburg VA Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

September 27 — Camp near Harrisonburg Va Eighteen men detailed from Cos. B and C for picket Arival of Recruits for the Regt three men for Co B.⁵² Very hot day

September 28 — Camp near Harrisonburg Virginia fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

September 29 — Orders to march at 5 A.M. Marched to Mount Crawford on a Reconnoisance in force and encamped for the night Rained a little

September 30 — Orders to march at 11 O clock A.M. Marched back to Harrisonburg and Encamped near the old Camping ground

October 1 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

October 2 — One hundred men detailed for a Scouting expedition fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

October 3 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

October 4 — Camp near Harrisonburg Shenandoah Valley Virginia fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

October 5 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

October 6 — Orders to March at 5 O. Clock AM Marched about four miles beyond Newmarket and encamped for the night Marched about 24 Miles altogether

⁵⁰Battle of Fisher's Hill.

⁵¹South of Woodstock, VA.

⁵²These recruits were all from Castleton: Joseph Andrus, Wallace D. Pearsons, and Henry C. Willard.

October 7 — orders to March at 5 A.M. Marched to Mount Jackson and then to Woodstock and encamped for the night

October 8 — orders to march at daylight marched to Strasburg and encamped on the banks of the Shenandoah river

October 9 — Camp near Strasburg Virginia Very Cold day General Inspection

October 10 — Orders to March at 8 O. Clock A.M. Marched about 18 Miles and Encamped near Front Royal

October 11 — Camp near Front Royal Virginia fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

October 12 — Camp near Front Royal Virginia Company Drill Raining in the evening All quiet in Camp

October 13 — Orders to march at 6 O.Clock A.M. Marched to the Vicinity of Snickers Gap. when the order was Countermanded Detailed for picket

October 14 — Orders to march at 3 O Clock A.M. Marched to Cedar Run and Encamped for the night

October 15 — Camp near Cedar Run Virginia Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

October 16 — Inspection of Arms Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

October 17 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

October 18 — Camp near Cedar Run Virginia fine day All quiet in Camp

October 19 — the enemy Surprised our Camp at daylight they drove in the 19th Corps and captured about 24 pieces of Artillery. Sheridan Returned and Charged with the 6th Corps and Captured 52 Cannon. many prisoners. Colors⁵³

October 20 — Camp on the old ground near Cedar Run Virginia. All quiet in Camp

October 21 — Orders to March at noon. Crossed the Cedar Run and Encamped near Strasburg Va. Rained a little during the night

October 22 — Camp near Strasburg Va Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

October 23 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

October 24 — Very Cold day Dr Hyde⁵⁴ has got back to the Regt All quiet in Camp

October 25 — Camp near Strasburg Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

October 26 — All quiet in Camp

October 27 — Very Cold day Raining all night All quiet in Camp

⁵³Battle of Cedar Creek. The Vermont Brigade's part of this action is illustrated in Julian Scott's well known painting on display in the Cedar Creek Room of the Vermont State House.

⁵⁴Surgeon Melvin J. Hyde of the Second Regiment.

October 28 — Cold wind all day All quiet in Camp

October 29 — All quiet in Camp

October 30 — Went to Cedar Creek All quiet in Camp

October 31 — division Review by Genl Getty and mustered for four months pay⁵⁵

November 1 — Camp near Strasburg Va. fine day all quiet in Camp

November 2 — Raining all day Very cold day

November 3 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp the 2nd Vt 5th Vt went on a reconnoissance to fishers hill

November 4 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

November 5 — Encamped at Strasburg Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

November 6 — General Inspection at 11 O. Clock A.M. Orders to Move at a Moments notice Very Cold wind

November 7 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

November 8 — Election of President of the United States the 2nd Vt had 30 majority for McClellan⁵⁶ but the brigade had a large majority for Lincoln

November 9 — Orders to move at daylight it rained all day and it is very muddy Encamped at 7 p.m. near Winchester Va

November 10 — Encamped about 6 miles from Winchester fine day All quiet in Camp

November 11 — the Enemy attacked our Cavalry Pickets the Infantry are building breastworks Very Cold day

November 12 — The firing is brisk on the picket line the Rebels drove in our Cavalry but we drove them back again

November 13 — the Rebels withdrew from our front Very Cold day we are build strong works in our front

November 14 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

November 15 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

November 16 — Raining All day Brigade dress parade

November 17 — Raing [raining] in the Morning. afternoon fair

November 18 — Raining very hard All day the night is very dark

November 19 — went to the Div Hospital Fine day Brigade Dress parade

November 20 — Fine day. no duty All quiet in Camp

November 21 — Camp near Winchester All quiet in Camp

⁵⁵General George Washington Getty, division commander.

⁵⁶George B. McClellan, formerly the revered commander of the Army of the Potomac.

November 22 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

November 23 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

November 24 — Brigade Dress parade fine day

November 25 — went on a foraging expedition about four miles beyond the Cavalry Videttes⁵⁷

November 26 — Raining all day it is very muddy went to the division Hospital for medicine for the Regiment

November 27 — Raining all day Very Muddy All quiet in Camp

November 28 — Battalion Drill and Brigade Dress parade All quiet in Camp

November 29 — Camp Russell⁵⁸ Shenandoah Valley Virginia Fine day

November 30 — The first Division is ordered to Washington they have taken transports to go farther South

December 1 — Arrival of the 6th Corps Teamsters from City Point

December 2 — Battalion Drill

December 3 — the third Division Moved at 3 O.Clock this morning and ordered to follow the first Division Probably to Savannah⁵⁹

December 4 — The train and Div Hospital moved to Winchester in order to be in Readiness for us to go with them

December 5 — Part of the Train returned when they found out that we were not going to move untill further notice

December 6 — Very fine day All quiet in Camp

December 7 — Raining all day all quiet in Camp

December 8 — Orders to move at daylight tomorrow Morning

December 9 — Struck tents at 4 Oclock and marched to Stevens Station and took the Cars for Washington. Snowing all night and it is very Cold

December 10 — Arrived at Washington and took the Steam boat to City Point drew three days Rations on Board the Steamer

December 11 — Reached Fortress Monroe at 10 p m and Cast anchor in the James River at Midnight⁶⁰

December 12 — Weighed Anchor at daylight Arrived at City Point at 1 O Clock p.m. and went with the Horses to Parkers depot about 12 miles

⁵⁷A vidette is a mounted sentry advanced in front of the lines.

⁵⁸Named after General David Russell, commander of the First Division, 6th Corps, killed at Winchester on 19 September 1864.

⁵⁹Savannah, GA. This rumor was false.

⁶⁰Fortress Monroe is located at Hampton Roads, Virginia, near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay.



City Point at juncture of Appomattox and James rivers where roads, rails and wharves met to supply the Army of the Potomac.



Burial party Old Vermont Brigade, Camp Griffin 1861

December 13 — Received two months pay and moved into the camp of the fifth Army Corps all is quiet in our front

December 14 — building up our quarters and fixing the Camp all around Head quarters fine day

December 15 — All quiet in our front Heavy Cannon afiring the North Side of the James Probably at Dutch Gap⁶¹

December 16 — Execution of three Soldiers that deserted into the rebels ranks and Captured by our Corps in the Shenandoah Valley

December 17 — Heavy picket Skirmish during the day Very warm day

December 18 — A Salute of 100 guns was fired in honor of Genl. Thomas's over Hood in Tennessee⁶²

December 19 — Raining all day All quiet in Camp

December 20 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

December 21 — Very cold day

December 22 — Freezing all day All quiet in Camp

December 23 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp execution of three deserters

December 24 — It is rumored in Camp that the picks [pickets] of one Rebel division Deserted into our lines Very little firing going on

December 25 — Fine day no duty All quiet in Camp

December 26 — Official Reports Reached here today Contains the Capture of Savannah by Genl Sherman together with 150 guns and 1000 prisoners

December 27 — the roads are very muddy it Rained a little in the Morning no firing All quiet in Camp

December 28 — The reports of the Capture of Savannah is fully confirmed the Rebels burned the navy yard and a ferry and boats before they left

December 29 — Very Cold day All quiet in Camp

December 30 — Execution of a Deserter Very pleasant day

December 31 — Received the old Camp Griffin⁶³ overcoats General Muster for four months pay Snowing all day it is dreadful Cold

⁶¹On the James River.

⁶²Battle of Nashville, TN, 15-16 December 1864. Gen. George Thomas. Gen. John B. Hood.

⁶³Camp Griffin was the 1861-1862 winter encampment site for the Vermont Brigade. It is now the location of the headquarters for the CIA. (See picture on opposite page).

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ISSN 0748-2493

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